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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/737,588	12/18/2000	Yutaka Saito	1046.1227/JDH	1682
21171	7590	08/25/2005	EXAMINER	
STAAS & HALSEY LLP SUITE 700 1201 NEW YORK AVENUE, N.W. WASHINGTON, DC 20005				JERABEK, KELLY L
		ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER
		2612		

DATE MAILED: 08/25/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/737,588	SAITO, YUTAKA	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Kelly L. Jerabek	2612	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 April 2005.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-12 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-12 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-3, 5-9, and 12 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wakabayashi et al. US 5,097,285 in view of Teruo Hieda JP-174893.

Re claims 1, 5, 6, 8, and 12 Wakabayashi discloses in figure 1 a camera (1) capable of operating in a self-timer mode and an ordinary photographing mode. The camera includes a timer (110) and a control unit (microcomputer 100) monitoring a

button (shutter button 4) for execution of taking a photograph of an image (col. 2, lines 11-68). The camera includes a self-timer button (2), which is pressed in order to place the camera in self-timer mode. When the camera is in self-timer mode (self-timer button 2 depressed) and the shutter button (4) is depressed, the microcomputer (100) activates an exposure control circuit (160) after a predetermined period of time (T1) and thus a photograph is taken after the predetermined time period (T1) (col. 2, lines 49-68).

Although the Wakabayashi reference discloses the self-timer operation of a camera above, the reference requires the use of two separate buttons (self-timer button 2, and shutter button 4) in order to place the camera in self-timer mode. The self-timer camera disclosed by Wakabayashi does not set a second count time when a first count time elapses before a depressed shutter button is released in order to perform the self-timer operation by using only one button.

Hieda discloses a color video camera including a control circuit (101) for generating control signals (S1, S2) by a single white-balance switch (102) (page 2, paragraph 1). Hieda states that prior operation procedures for adjusting white-balance of a camera required the use of a change-over switch (12) and a setting switch (18) (page 1, paragraph 1). The control circuit (101) disclosed by Hieda generates control signals (S1,S2) for changing the mode of the camera based on the time period that the white-balance switch (102) is depressed (page 2, paragraph 2 – page 4, paragraph 1). Therefore, it can be seen that the control circuit (101) serves as both a timer and a control unit. It can be seen in Fig. 4C that if the white-balance switch (102) is pressed (detecting depression of a button) for a time period longer than a first predetermined

time period (T1) control signal (S2) is set in a high-level state for a second predetermined period of time (T2). Therefore, it can be seen that the timer is started (T2 is started) after the switch (102) is pressed for at least the first predetermined period of time (T1). Also, after the second predetermined time period (T2) the control signal is again sent to a hold state which causes the camera to revert to tracking mode (thus a mode change occurs). Therefore, it can be seen that after the timer has counted a second predetermined period of time (after T2) the camera changes from setting mode to tracking mode because control signal S2 is again in a hold state (page 3 paragraph 1). Thus, by operation of a single white-balance switch (102) being pressed for relatively a shorter or a longer timer period, it is possible to switch the mode from the setting mode to the tracking mode, a method that previously required a change-over switch (12) and a setting switch (18) (page 1, paragraph 1; page 4, paragraph 1). Therefore, it would have been obvious for one skilled in the art to have been motivated to replace the multiple functional switches (self-timer button, shutter button) in the camera disclosed by Wakabayashi with a single switch that is capable of performing the same operations by being pressed for a relatively shorter or longer time period as disclosed by Hieda. Doing so would provide a means for providing an imaging device having a smaller number of operation means so that it can avoid misoperation (Hieda: page 1, paragraph).

Re claims 2, 7, and 9 Hieda discloses in figures 4a and 4b that if the white-balance swich (102) is pressed for a period of time shorter than the first predetermined

time period (T1) (a.k.a. the button is released before the end of the period (T1)) , the control signal (S1) performs a reverse operation and a switching operation from the setting mode to the tracking mode or from the tracking mode to the setting mode is performed (page 2, paragraph 3 – page 3, paragraph 1). Therefore, a mode change (image photographing process) is executed immediately after releasing the white-balance switch (102) is released from being depressed.

Re claim 3, Hieda discloses all of the limitations of claim 1 above. However, the Hieda reference fails to distinctly state that the video camera including a white-balance switch is a connectable/disconnectable image acquisition device. The Examiner takes **Official Notice** that is well known in the art to provide video cameras that are capable of being connected or disconnected to external devices. Therefore, it would have been obvious for one skilled in the art to have been motivated to include a video camera that is capable of being connected/disconnected to external devices. Doing so would provide a means for connecting the camera to a remote device in order to expand the capabilities of the camera.

Claims 4 and 10-11 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wakabayashi in view of Teruo Hieda and further in view of Schrock et al. US 5,923,908.

Re claim 4, the combination of the Wakabayashi and Hidea references discloses all of the limitations of claim 1 above. However, the combination fails to state that a button for taking a photograph of an image (shutter button) is displayed on a display device.

Schrock discloses in figure 2, a camera including a touch sensitive Liquid Crystal Display Screen (22). The LCD (22) includes virtual buttons (27,28,29) that allow the user to control various camera functions (col. 3, lines 25-64). Therefore, it would have been obvious for one skilled in the art to have been motivated to include the concept of providing buttons for controlling camera functions on a display as disclosed by Schrock in the self-timing camera including a shutter button that can be depressed by a user as disclosed by Wakabayashi in view of Hieda. Doing so would provide a means for allowing a user to operate a camera using touch input in order to simplify the electronics of the camera (Schrock: col. 2, lines 40-45).

Re claim 10, Wakabayashi discloses in figure 1 a camera (1) capable of operating in a self-timer mode and an ordinary photographing mode. The camera includes a timer (110) and a control unit (microcomputer 100) monitoring a button (shutter button 4) for execution of taking a photograph of an image (col. 2, lines 11-68). The camera includes a self-timer button (2), which is pressed in order to place the camera in self-timer mode. When the camera is in self-timer mode (self-timer button 2 depressed) and the shutter button (4) is depressed, the microcomputer (100) activates an exposure control circuit (160) after a predetermined period of time (T1) and thus a

photograph is taken after the predetermined time period (T1) (col. 2, lines 49-68).

Although the Wakabayashi reference discloses the self-timer operation of a camera above, the reference requires the use of two separate buttons (self-timer button 2, and shutter button 4) in order to place the camera in self-timer mode. The self-timer camera disclosed by Wakabayashi does not set a second count time when a first count time elapses before a depressed shutter button is released in order to perform the self-timer operation by using only one button.

Hieda discloses a color video camera including a control circuit (101) for generating control signals (S1, S2) by a single white-balance switch (102) (page 2, paragraph 1). Hieda states that prior operation procedures for adjusting white-balance of a camera required the use of a change-over switch (12) and a setting switch (18) (page 1, paragraph 1). The control circuit (101) disclosed by Hieda generates control signals (S1,S2) for changing the mode of the camera based on the time period that the white-balance switch (102) is depressed (page 2, paragraph 2 – page 4, paragraph 1). Therefore, it can be seen that the control circuit (101) serves as both a timer and a control unit. It can be seen in Fig. 4C that if the white-balance switch (102) is pressed (detecting depression of a button) for a time period longer than a first predetermined time period (T1) control signal (S2) is set in a high-level state for a second predetermined period of time (T2). Therefore, it can be seen that the timer is started (T2 is started) after the switch (102) is pressed for at least the first predetermined period of time (T1). Also, after the second predetermined time period (T2) the control signal is again sent to a hold state which causes the camera to revert to tracking mode (thus a

mode change occurs). Therefore, it can be seen that after the timer has counted a second predetermined period of time (after T2) the camera changes from setting mode to tracking mode because control signal S2 is again in a hold state (page 3 paragraph 1). Thus, by operation of a single white-balance switch (102) being pressed for relatively a shorter or a longer timer period, it is possible to switch the mode from the setting mode to the tracking mode, a method that previously required a change-over switch (12) and a setting switch (18) (page 1, paragraph 1; page 4, paragraph 1). Therefore, it would have been obvious for one skilled in the art to have been motivated to replace the multiple functional switches (self-timer button, shutter button) in the camera disclosed by Wakabayashi with a single switch that is capable of performing the same operations by being pressed for a relatively shorter or longer time period as disclosed by Hieda. Doing so would provide a means for providing an imaging device having a smaller number of operation means so that it can avoid misoperation (Hieda: page 1, paragraph 1). The combination of the Wakabayashi and Hieda references discloses all of the limitations of claim 1 above. However, the combination fails to state that a button for taking a photograph of an image (shutter button) is displayed on a display device.

Schrock discloses in figure 2, a camera including a touch sensitive Liquid Crystal Display Screen (22). The LCD (22) includes virtual buttons (27,28,29) that allow the user to control various camera functions (col. 3, lines 25-64). Therefore, it would have been obvious for one skilled in the art to have been motivated to include the concept of providing buttons for controlling camera functions on a display as disclosed by Schrock

in the self-timing camera including a shutter button that can be depressed by a user as disclosed by Wakabayashi in view of Hieda. Doing so would provide a means for allowing a user to operate a camera using touch input in order to simplify the electronics of the camera (Schrock: col. 2, lines 40-45).

Re claim 11, Hieda discloses in figures 4a and 4b that if the white-balance switch (102) is pressed for a period of time shorter than the first predetermined time period (T1) (a.k.a. the button is released before the end of the period (T1)), the control signal (S1) performs a reverse operation and a switching operation from the setting mode to the tracking mode or from the tracking mode to the setting mode is performed (page 2, paragraph 3 – page 3, paragraph 1). Therefore, a mode change (image photographing process) is executed immediately after releasing the white-balance switch (102) is released from being depressed.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

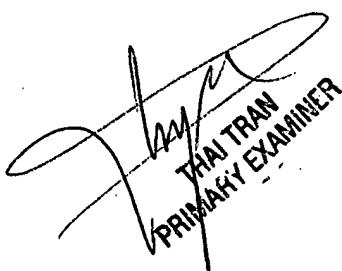
Inoue et al. (US 6,853,403) discloses a digital camera having a self-timer shooting function. The information regarding a camera including a self-timer shooting mode is relevant material.

Maruyama (US 6,411,780) discloses a camera having electronic image-pickup capability and capable of performing self-timer photography. The information regarding a camera including a self-timer shooting mode is relevant material.

Contacts

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kelly L. Jerabek whose telephone number is **(571) 272-7312**. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday (8:00 AM - 5:00 PM).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Thai Tran can be reached at **(571) 272-~~7564~~⁷³⁸²**. The fax phone number for submitting all Official communications is **(571) 273-8300**. The fax phone number for submitting informal communications such as drafts, proposed amendments, etc., may be faxed directly to the Examiner at **(571) 273-7312**.

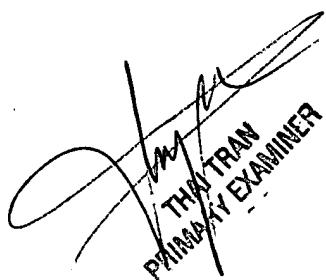


THAI TRAN
PRIMARY EXAMINER

A handwritten signature of "Thai Tran" is written over a stylized, swooping line. Below the signature, the words "PRIMARY EXAMINER" are printed vertically.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

KLJ



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phan Thai Tran". Below the signature, the words "PRIMARY EXAMINER" are printed vertically.